

COUNTY OF ERIE

PERSONNEL POLICIES & PROCEDURES

SUBJECT: COUNTY COMPUTER USAGE POLICY

DISTRIBUTION: ELECTED OFFICIALS, JUDGES, DEPARTMENT HEADS

FROM: PETER J. CALLAN, DIRECTOR OF PERSONNEL

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2001; Revised September 13, 2002; **Revised March 14, 2011**

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I. POLICY

County computers are intended to be used only for County work. Any personal use of any computer equipment provided to the employee is prohibited at all times. Whenever there is a question about this policy or appropriate use of computer equipment the employee should refer the question to his or her respective IT Department.

This policy applies to all computers owned by and under the control of the County of Erie and that are used for one or more of the following:

- As a terminal for a network or central computer system (e.g., FMS)
- As a PC running independent software (e.g., Word Processing)
- As a communications terminal (email, instant messaging, teleconferencing)
- No right of privacy exists for County employees using Internet or email services.
- If you receive an email message that harasses or threatens you, report it as soon as possible to your immediate supervisor.

II. PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES

The following list shows general examples of prohibited activities but does not constitute a conclusive list:

- Social networking (FaceBook, MySpace etc)
- Streaming audio and video via the internet and playing games
- Personal pictures or slide shows (wall paper)
- Pornography

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- Participation in chat rooms
- Commercial activity (selling or buying things or running a business)
- Political activity
- Religious activity
- Chain letters (sending or receiving)
- Instant messaging
- Sending global emails throughout the County without authorization
- Solicitation of funds (except for official County business)
- Private email accounts, both web-based (e.g., Hotmail) and POP3 (e.g., AOL)
- Personal password encoding files
- Use of unauthorized hardware, software, or modifications

III. ACCEPTED ACTIVITIES

- Sending or receiving email that assists you in work related duties
- Visiting websites with content applicable to work related duties
- Locating telephone numbers and addresses of witnesses, business and government partners, or other individuals associated with work related duties
- Making travel arrangements for work related duties
- Printing maps to conference locations
- Researching grants for County programs
- Other activities as assigned or approved by supervisor or department head

IV. COUNTY ACCESS AND OWNERSHIP OF ALL DATA

- The County retains ownership of all data, passwords, applications and software developed with the use of County resources.
- The County reserves and intends to exercise the right to monitor employees' use of County computers and to access any information stored on County computers. Please be advised that all internet usage is logged and may be monitored.
- Computers on the County network are for use by County employees only.
- Non-County personnel such as interns, work-studies, or personnel working under the direction of a County employee will only have access to a County computer under the supervision of County personnel with authorization to use County computer equipment.

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- Any activity conducted under a County employee user password will be attributed to the County user.
- County records stored on a County computer are considered confidential information and may only be distributed under the authority of the department head or by existing department policy.

V. HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE INSTALLATION AND SERVICE

- Only software approved by your IT Department may be installed on County computers.
- All hardware must be approved and installed by your IT Department.
- No unauthorized shareware, personal software, or unlicensed copyrighted software is to be used on County computers.
- Any modifications to the computer, software, setup, or configuration must be approved by your IT Department. Use of any outside support (e.g., a vendor, your knowledgeable brother-in-law, etc.) must receive prior approval by the systems administrator.
- New hardware and software added to County computers will be done only by County IT Departments or approved vendors after consultation with your IT Department to insure software compatibility with County WAN software and hardware.
- In the event a department head wishes to utilize the services of an outside vendor for computer software support, the vendor must consult with your IT Department before any changes are made to any computer operating on the County-wide network

VI. SECURITY

A. Passwords

- Employees are responsible for safeguarding passwords, which should not be written down (except when needed by systems administrator) or shared with others. If there is any reason to think a password might have been compromised, it should be changed immediately.
- Employees are prohibited from: adding any password security beyond that authorized by the your IT Department, storing password encrypted files on a County computer or storage medium, or placing password protection on files created for County business.

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- All security breaches, including compromised passwords, should be reported to your IT Department immediately.
- All County employees must be aware of and follow appropriate security provisions concerning logging on or off County computer systems and networks. County employees are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of their password and for all data that is placed on or deleted from a County computer.

B. Non-County Personnel

- Non-County personnel may not be given access to County computer workstations except as authorized by department heads. Unattended terminals must be locked or logged off.

C. Virus Protection

- Virus software must be kept active.
- All removable media or other transferable storage devices must be checked before utilizing the disk on a County computer by one of the approved network administrators or his/her designee to insure a virus will not be transmitted from or to the employee's home computer or the Erie County Wide Area Network. The employee's work disk must be checked each time the employee uses the disk on his/her home computer. Outside disks must be scanned for viruses before use.
- Email attachments may be opened only if they meet all of the following conditions:
 - 1) You fully understand the attachment's origin and purpose.
 - 2) There is a cover message that assures you the sender has knowingly sent the attachment to you.
 - 3) The attachment is work related.
 - 4) Your virus protection is active or the message has been scanned for virus after arrival.

D. Hacking

- It is forbidden to access any County files, software, or data to which you have not been authorized access.
- It is forbidden to use County computers to access the data or computer system of any other entity to which you do not have legitimate access.

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VII. UPON TERMINATION OF AN EMPLOYEE

- Upon termination of an employee, the system's administrator will be notified and revoke all access to County owned computers.
- The County owns all of the data on your computer; you may not delete any County data.

VIII. COMPUTER USE POLICY AGREEMENT

- Each year, all County employees shall sign a computer use policy statement indicating that they have read the policy and will adhere to all the responsibilities and requirements.

IX DISCIPLINARY ACTION FOR VIOLATION OF ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

Users who access restricted items on the internet or violate the Erie County Computer Policy will be subjected to the following action:

1. First Violation – Verbal warning
2. Second Violation – Written warning
3. Time off without pay up to and including discharge.

The Erie County computer network is designed for the sole purpose of aiding employees in the dispatch of Erie County official business. Employees who fail to adhere to all aspects of the County Computer Policy will be disciplined as outlined above or be subject to immediate discharge depending on the severity of the infraction.

Any questions concerning the Erie County Computer Policy or ramifications of the failure to follow its policy guidelines as it applies to the use of the County's computer should be forwarded to your respective IT Department or the County Personnel Department.

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COMPUTER USE POLICY AGREEMENT

I, _____, have read and completely understand the “Erie County Computer and Internet Use Policy” effective on March 14, 2011.

Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____

Date: _____

**Signature page will be placed in
Employee’s Personnel File in the Personnel Department**